

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Texas



September 17, 2021

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court

United States of America

v.

Ashlyne Blake Steen

Case No.

4:21-mj-1977

Defendant(s)

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of April 6, 2021 and April 26, 2021 in the county of Harris in the  
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

## Code Section

## Offense Description

Title 18, USC, § 1951(a)

Interference with Commerce by Robbery

Title 18, USC, § 924(c)

Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Crime of Violence

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached Affidavit in Support of an Application for a Criminal Complaint

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Chris Peckne, US Postal Inspector

Printed name and title

sworn to telephonically.

Date: September 17, 2021

Judge's signature

City and state: Houston, Texas

Dena Palermo, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Postal Inspector Chris Peckne, being first duly sworn, state:

1. I am employed as a Federal Agent United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS). I am currently assigned to the Violent Crimes Team, which investigates crimes against United States Postal Service (USPS) and its employees. I have been employed with USPIS since February 2017. Throughout my law enforcement career I have conducted numerous investigations involving robberies and assaults. Through these investigations as well as my formal training, I have become familiar with patterns of activity regarding robberies of USPS Letter Carriers and the methods they employ to plan, coordinate and conduct these robberies. The following information was obtained by investigators working on this case and at the scene, including myself, and was provided to me by such officers.

2. I make this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint for the arrest of Ashlyne Blake STEEN for committing the offenses of Interference with Commerce by Robbery, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 1951(a) and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Crime of Violence, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 924(c).

3. The information presented in this affidavit is based on my own personal investigation and the investigation of other law enforcement officers, which was communicated to me orally or via written communication. The facts set forth do not constitute all that has been learned in the course of the investigation but only enough to establish that probable cause exists for the issuance of a complaint and arrest warrant. Conversations and events are related in substance and in-part only.

4. A USPS Arrow Key (“Arrow Key”) is a universal key utilized by USPS employees, including Letter Carriers, to access collection boxes, outdoor parcel lockers, cluster box units, and apartment panels. Arrow Keys are accountable property of the USPS.

5. On April 6, 2021, a USPS Letter Carrier (“Letter Carrier #1”) was on-duty delivering the U.S. Mail at an apartment complex located at 12800 Dunlap Street, Houston, Texas 77085. At or around 2:15 PM, Letter Carrier #1 was approached by what he believed to be an African American male, 15 or 16 years of age, wearing a black and red long sleeve shirt and matching pants with a camouflage backpack, later identified as Ashlyne Blake STEEN. STEEN pointed a small black semi-automatic handgun at Letter Carrier #1’s leg and stated “[g]ive me the key.” Letter Carrier #1 removed the assigned Arrow Key and handed it to STEEN, who then fled the area on foot.

6. Investigators obtained surveillance video from the apartment complex, and viewed STEEN prior to the robbery, seen below in **EXHIBIT A**, walking in the area of Letter Carrier #1. STEEN removed what appeared to be a handgun from her pocket or waistband and approached the Letter Carrier #1.

**EXHIBIT A:**



7. On April 26, 2021, a USPS Letter Carrier (“Letter Carrier #2”) was on-duty delivering the U.S. Mail in the area of 2701 West Bellfort Avenue, Houston, Texas 77054 in the Southern District of Texas. At or around 12:40 PM, Letter Carrier #2 was approached by a young, skinny, African American female, later identified as STEEN, holding a black semi-automatic handgun. STEEN asked Letter Carrier #2 for the “gold key.” Letter Carrier #2 stated he did not have a “gold key” and STEEN responded it was the key that opened the boxes. Letter Carrier #2 told STEEN the key was still in the lock. STEEN removed the key from the lock and fled the area on foot.

8. Investigators obtained surveillance video from the area of the armed robbery and identified the individual seen below in **EXHIBIT B**, STEEN, as the suspect.

**EXHIBIT B:**



9. Investigators further note the location of this robbery on April 26, 2021, is approximately 3/10 of a mile from STEEN’s residence at 8877 Lakes at 610 Drive, Houston, Texas 77054.

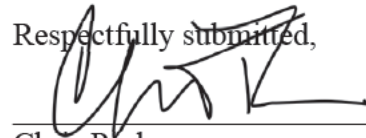
10. On or about September 16, 2021, a Federal search warrant was executed at STEEN'S apartment located at 8877 Lakes at 610, Apartment #235, Houston, Texas 77054. During the search of STEEN's apartment, Investigators discovered, among other things, a dark blue colored jacket matching the jacket seen in **EXHIBIT A**, and a pair of shoes and a pair of boxer briefs matching those seen in **EXHIBIT B**. Investigators further located a black in color Smith and Wesson semi-automatic handgun on the nightstand by STEEN's bed.

11. In a Mirandized interview, on September 16, 2021, STEEN admitted to Investigators the that she had committed the robberies on April 6, 2021 and on April 26, 2021. STEEN also identified the persons in **EXHIBIT A** and **EXHIBIT B** as being her.

#### **CONCLUSION**

12. Based upon evidence developed at the scenes of the two robberies, evidence seized during the execution of the search warrant of STEEN's residence and STEEN's statement to investigators, there is probable cause to believe that STEEN has committed the offenses of Interference with Commerce by Robbery, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 1951(a) and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Crime of Violence, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 924(c).

Respectfully submitted,



Chris P. Ckne  
United States Postal Inspector

Subscribed and sworn telephonically pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 and 41(d)(3) on September 16, 2021 and I find probable cause.

  
DENA HANOVICE PALERMO  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE